

What Is Claimed Is:

1 1. A method of enabling an operator to remotely manage a plurality of field devices
2 designed to implement a manufacturing process in a manufacturing plant, said manufacturing
3 plant further containing a field device management station (FDMS) coupled to said plurality
4 of field devices by a control network, said method comprising:

5 providing a wireless connection from a first client, wherein said wireless connection
6 provides communication between said first client and said FDMS;

7 enabling said operator to issue a command from said first client to a first field device
8 contained in said plurality of field devices;

9 transferring said command from said first client to said FDMS on said wireless
10 connection; and

11 forwarding said command from said FDMS to said first field device on said control
12 network,

13 whereby said operator can manage said plurality of field devices using said first client.

1 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

2 connecting said first client to a second field device contained in said plurality of field
3 devices;

4 transferring a second command from said FDMS to said first client using said wireless
5 connection, wherein said second command is directed to said second field device; and

6 sending said second command from said first client to said second field device,
7 whereby said second command is forwarded from said FDMS to said to said second field

8 device without using said control network.

1 3. The method of claim 2, further comprising enabling said operator to issue said
2 second command from said first client, wherein said FDMS receives said second command
3 and performs said transferring said second command.

1 4. The method of claim 1, wherein said wireless connection is provided between said
2 FDMS and said first client.

1 5. The method of claim 1, wherein said wireless connection is provided between said
2 first client and a network device, wherein said network device is connected to a network
3 connecting said network device to said FDMS by a wire-based medium.

1 6. The method of claim 1, further comprising a second client connected to said FDMS
2 by a wire-based medium, said method further comprising:

3 transferring another command from said second client to said FDMS on said wire-
4 based medium, said another command being directed to a second device contained in said
5 plurality of field devices; and

6 forwarding said another command from said FDMS to said second field device,

7 whereby commands from clients connected by both wire-based and wireless mediums
8 are channeled through said FDMS.

1 7. The method of claim 6, maintaining a central log of said command and said
2 another command in said FDMS, wherein said central log is updated within a short time after
3 said operator issues said command and said another command, wherein use of said wire-less
4 connection enables said FDMS to easily maintain said central log and also for said operator
5 to manage said plurality of field devices using said first client.

1 8. A field device management station (FDMS) enabling management of a plurality
2 of field devices, said plurality of field devices being coupled to said FDMS by a control
3 network, said FDMS comprising:

4 a wireless interface providing connectivity to a first client by a wireless medium; and
5 a data manager block receiving a first command from said first client on said wireless
6 medium, said first command being directed to a first field device contained in said plurality
7 of field devices, said data manager forwarding said first command from on said control
8 network,

9 wherein said first command is issued by an operator such that said operator can
10 manage said plurality of field devices using said first client.

1 9. The FDMS of claim 8, wherein said data manager block is operable to receive a
2 second command from said first client on said wireless medium, said second command being
3 directed to a second field device contained in said plurality of field devices, said second field
4 device being connected to said first client, said data manager block forwarding said second
5 command on said wireless medium to said first client.

1 10. The FDMS of claim 9, further comprising a wire-line interface providing
2 connectivity to a second client by a wire-line based medium, said data manager block
3 receiving a second command from said second client, said second command being directed
4 to a second field device contained in said plurality of devices, said data manager block
5 forwarding said second command to said second field device on said control network.

1 11. The FDMS of claim 10, further comprising:
2 a wireless client handler provided between said wireless interface and said data
3 manager, said wireless client handler receiving said first command on said wireless medium,
4 said wireless client handler further receiving a first response from said data manager block
5 and forwarding said first response on said wireless medium; and

6 a wire-line client handler provided between said wire-line interface and said data
7 manager, said wire-based client handler receiving said second command on said wire-based
8 medium, said wire-based client handler further receiving a second response from said data
9 manager block and forwarding said second response on said wire-based medium.

1 12. The FDMS of claim 11, wherein said data manager receives a request to establish
2 a connection from said first client and instantiates said wireless client handler in response to
3 receiving said request.

1 13. The FDMS of claim 9, wherein said data manager maintains a central log

2 containing information on said first command and said second command, wherein
3 maintenance of said central log is simplified due to routing of said first command and said
4 second command through said FDMS.

1 14. A computer readable medium carrying one or more sequences of instructions for
2 causing a field device management station (FDMS) to enable management of a plurality of
3 field devices, said plurality of field devices being coupled to said FDMS by a control
4 network, wherein execution of said one or more sequences of instructions by one or more
5 processors contained in said FDMS causes said one or more processors to perform the actions
6 of:

7 receiving a first command from said first client on a wireless medium, said first
8 command being directed to a first field device contained in said plurality of field devices; and
9 forwarding said first command on said control network to said first field device,
10 wherein said first command is issued by an operator such that said operator can
11 manage said plurality of field devices using said first client.

1 15. The computer readable medium of claim 14, further comprising:
2 receiving a second command from said first client on said wireless medium, said
3 second command being directed to a second field device contained in said plurality of field
4 devices, said second field device being connected to said first client; and
5 forwarding said second command on said wireless medium to said first client.

1 16. The computer readable medium of claim 15, further comprising:

2 receiving a third command from said third client on a wire-line based medium, said
3 third command being directed to a third field device contained in said plurality of devices;
4 and
5 forwarding said third command to said third field device on said control network.

1 17. The computer readable medium of claim 15, further comprising maintaining a
2 central log containing information on said first command and said second command, wherein
3 maintenance of said central log is simplified due to routing of said first command and said
4 second command through said FDMS.

1 18. A computer readable medium carrying one or more sequences of instructions for
2 causing a client to enable remote management of a plurality of field devices, said plurality
3 of field devices being coupled to a FDMS by a control network, wherein execution of said
4 one or more sequences of instructions by one or more processors contained in said client
5 causes said one or more processors to perform the actions of:

6 sending a first command to said FDMS on a wireless medium, said first command
7 being directed to a first field device contained in said plurality of field devices; and

8 receiving a first response on said wireless medium from said FDMS;

9 wherein said first command is issued by an operator such that said operator can
10 manage said plurality of field devices using said first client.

1 19. The computer readable medium of claim 18, wherein said client is connected to
2 a second device, further comprising:

3 sending a second command to said FDMS on said wireless medium, said second
4 command being directed to a second field device contained in said plurality of field devices;

5 receiving said second command from said FDMS on said wireless medium; and

6 forwarding said second command to said second device after said receiving from said
7 FDMS.